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HR-O-9343

6 MAR 1950

Major General Charles P. Cabell  
Director of Intelligence  
Headquarters, United States Air Force  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear General Cabell:

The receipt is acknowledged of your circular memorandum dated 27 February 1950 about changing U.S. policy regarding the treatment of foreign Military, Naval, and Air Attaches assigned to the U.S. by their governments.

I agree with you that this policy should be reviewed in the light of world conditions at present and that the U.S. might well establish strict reciprocity in granting privileges to foreign attaches whose governments so rigidly restrict the activities of our own attaches.

I should say, however, that this matter is of primary concern to the Departments of Defense and State, but this Agency, of course, has a vital interest in the collection capabilities of our attaché organization. You will recall that I wrote the Secretary of Defense at the request of the Intelligence Advisory Committee on 17 February 1950 to the effect that our Service Attaches are the backbone of our military intelligence collection effort. Foreign governments may well feel the same way about their own attaches. As I see it, however, the change you suggest in our diplomatic policy is not within the competence of this intelligence Agency or of the Intelligence Advisory Committee.

Since our Service Intelligence Offices, in charge of the foreign military, naval, and air attaches assigned here, presumably cannot give highly selective treatment to the various nationalities on duty here, they can make their recommendations for changes in policy to the Secretary of Defense who in turn can take up the diplomatic phases of this matter with the Secretary of State. They are the President's Cabinet Officers chiefly concerned in this policy matter, whereas this Agency's duties pertain to the coordination of national intelligence.

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However, if it might be considered helpful, this Agency, although having only an indirect interest in the subject, is prepared to submit to the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State a statement endorsing the imposing of restrictions on Soviet and satellite attaches, comparable to those placed on our own attaches abroad.

I am requesting my staff to discuss this matter further with your staff.

Sincerely,

*Signed*

R. H. HILLENKOTTER  
Rear Admiral, USN  
Director of Central  
Intelligence

cc: All IAC Members

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